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ABSTRACT

This article describes a 10-step process for bookwebbing, a method of using a storybook for instruction in a variety of curriculum areas. The process, which is recommended to be used in cooperation with another teacher, is as follows: (1) choose a book which can apply to many curriculum areas; (2) read the whole book; (3) read it again in two or three weeks and record ideas related to each curriculum area; (4) compare the ideas with those of another teacher; (5) develop a thematic web; (6) develop specific lesson plans from the web; (7) begin reading the book aloud to the class, a chapter or two each day, while implementing ideas in related subject areas; (8) take notes on the effectiveness of different ideas and compare the results with those of another teacher; (9) give students many follow-up activities; and (10) carefully think through the next book to be selected. A sample thematic web used with "Lafcadio, The Lion Who Shot Back," by Shel Silverstein, is included. (DC)

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Bookwebbing across the curriculum

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> "Good heavens," cried the hunter, "a ferocious lion, a dangerous lion, a roaring blood thirsty, man-eating lion."
> "I am not a man-eating lion," said the young lion. "I eat rabbits and blackberries."
> "No excuses," said the hunter. "I am going to shoot you."
> "But I give up," said the young lion, and he put his paws in the air.

So begins the remarkable tale of *Lafcadio, The Lion Who Shot Back* (Copyright © 1963 by Shel Silverstein. Reprinted by permission of Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., New York, N.Y.). This delightful story is a gold mine for any teacher interested in using a book to its full potential and, at the same time, developing an integrated curriculum. This can be achieved through "bookwebbing."

What is bookwebbing and how does it work? Those familiar with theme development are probably aware of the webbing process. A thematic web is a chart of possible avenues of study with a particular topic, displaying alternative ways to approach a topic and teach the basic skills at the same time. A web records a teacher's brainstorming of possible teaching ideas. It is not likely that all the ideas listed in the web would be used, but having a variety of directions to choose from gives a teacher a great deal of flexibility.

The notion of webbing implies an integrated curriculum, one that connects the various subject areas. As students are encouraged to study a specific topic in depth with various curriculum areas interrelated, they gain a broader perspective of that topic and can apply the new knowledge in a multitude of ways.

Recommended steps for bookwebbing

If possible, work with at least one other teacher when you use this process. The adage that "two hands are better than one" certainly applies here.

Step 1. Screen several books which may be appropriate for your class. Choose books that can be read chapter by chapter. Look for one you would feel comfortable reading aloud, one that you feel your students would enjoy listening to, one that contains portions which apply to many curriculum areas (language arts, math, science, social studies, art, music, physical education, and health).

Step 2. Read the whole book yourself. Get a feel for the author's style and the main storyline. Think of this as pleasure reading and try to imagine how a child would react if the book were read aloud.

Step 3. Read the book again after 2 or 3 weeks. Take a blank piece of paper for each subject area and, as you reread the book, record ideas from it that occur to you under each curriculum area.

Step 4. Compare your ideas with those of another teacher. Sit down and discuss each other's ideas and particular techniques to use in your

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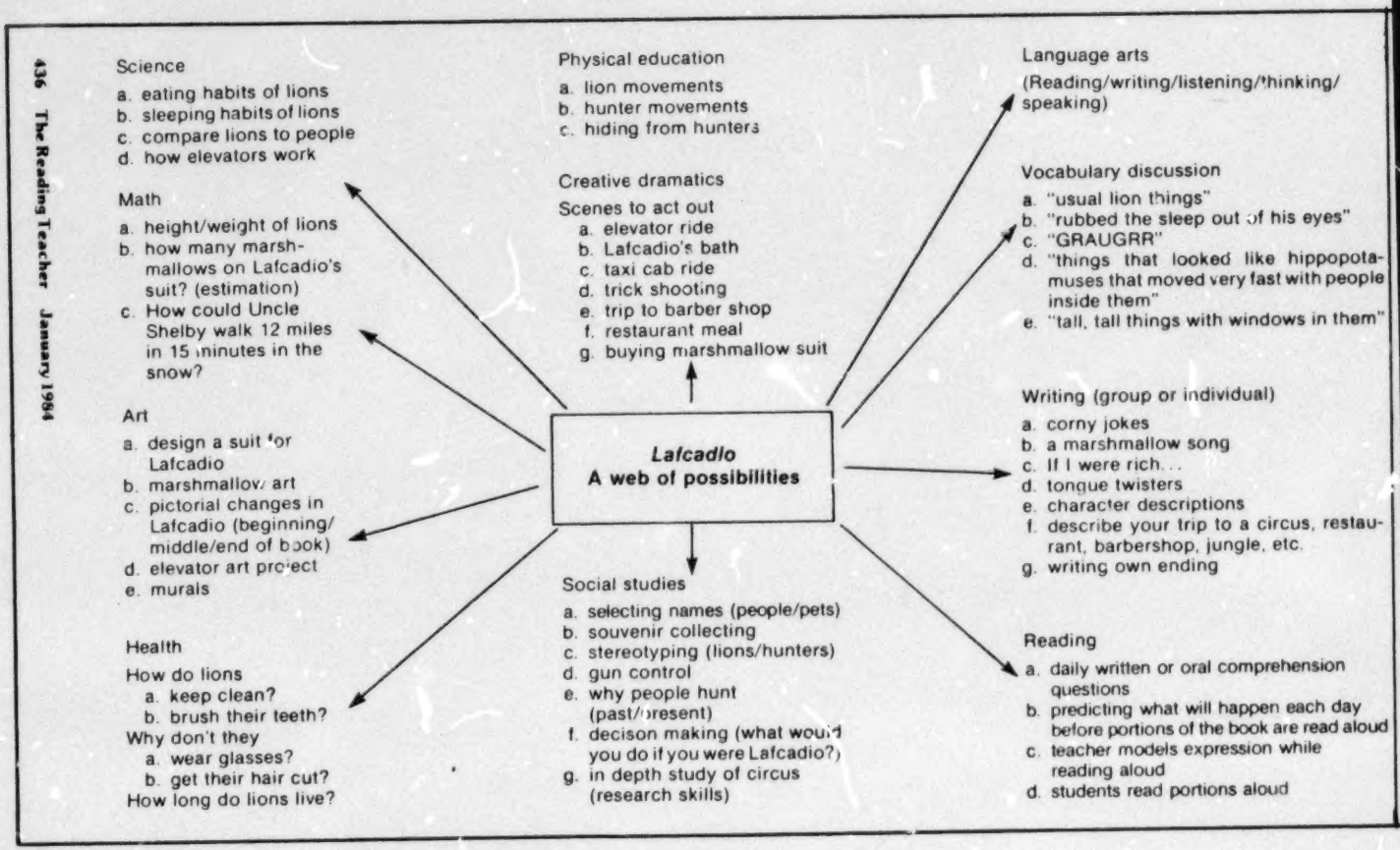
Science
a. eating habits of lions
b. sleeping habits of lions
c. compare lions to people
d. how elevators work
Math
a. height/weight of lions
b. how many marshmallows on Lafcadio's suit? (estimation)
c. How could Uncle Shelby walk 12 miles in 15 minutes in the snow?
Art
a. design a suit for Lafcadio
b. marshmallow art
c. pictorial changes in Lafcadio (beginning/middle/end of book)
d. elevator art project
e. murals
Health
How do lions
a. keep clean?
b. brush their teeth?
Why don't they
a. wear glasses?
b. get their hair cut?
How long do lions live?
Physical education
a. lion movements
b. hunter movements
c. hiding from hunters
Creative dramatics
Scenes to act out
a. elevator ride
b. Lafcadio's bath
c. taxi cab ride
d. trick shooting
e. trip to barber shop
f. restaurant meal
g. buying marshmallow suit
Lafcadio
A web of possibilities
Social studies
a. selecting names (people/pets)
b. souvenir collecting
c. stereotyping (lions/hunters)
d. gun control
e. why people hunt (past/present)
f. decison making (what would you do if you were Lafcadio?)
g. in depth study of circus (research skills)
Language arts
(Reading/writing/listening/thinking/speaking)
Vocabulary discussion
a. "usual lion things"
b. "rubbed the sleep out of his eyes"
c. "GRAUGRR"
d. "things that looked like hippopotamuses that moved very fast with people inside them"
e. "tall, tall things with windows in them"
Writing (group or individual)
a. corny jokes
b. a marshmallow song
c. If I were rich...
d. tongue twisters
e. character descriptions
f. describe your trip to a circus, restaurant, barbershop, jungle, etc.
g. writing own ending
Reading
a. daily written or oral comprehension questions
b. predicting what will happen each day before portions of the book are read aloud
c. teacher models expression while reading aloud
d. students read portions aloud

instruction. Think about whole class instruction and individual needs.

Step 5. Develop your web: Make as many connections as possible with different areas. (The Figure shows a web developed for Silverstein's *Lafcadio*. Notice how well it lends itself to all the curriculum areas.)

Step 6. Develop specific lesson plans from your web.

Step 7. Begin reading the book aloud to the class, a chapter or two each day, implementing your ideas in related subject areas. Each time you're working with a part of your web, be sure to solicit and record, on the web, ideas from your students.

(a) Be prepared to discuss what is happening in the book before, during and after reading aloud each day.

(b) Follow up each day's reading with good comprehension questions. They can be answered orally or in writing and should vary in levels of difficulty from recall to interpretation and evaluation.

(c) In selecting specific activities from your web, deliberately cover as many curriculum areas as possible.

Step 8. Take careful notes as you continue to use a particular book, documenting your successes and failures with particular ideas. Take the time to compare your results with those of another teacher and see if there are different ways you could approach some areas to produce the kind of results you are seeking.

Step 9. As you finish the book, give students many follow-up activities. Drama and art may be particularly motivating at this time.

Step 10. Carefully think through the next book you select to read aloud. Try to find a book whose main theme has features in common with *Lafcadio* and will further extend your students' thinking.

> "Well, finally, after traveling for many days and nights they [Lafcadio and the Circus Man] came to the city—and, oh, it wasn't anything at all like the jungle. There were lots of people and tall square things and things that looked like hippopotamuses that moved very fast with people inside them."

Such a paragraph contains so many possibilities. How did they travel? How are the city and jungle different? (alike)? What are the tall square things? What are the things that looked like hippopotamuses? Why didn't Lafcadio know what these things were?

> "Poor, poor Lafcadio—what do you do when you don't want to be a hunter—and you don't want to be a lion?"
>
> "Look," he said, "I don't want to shoot any lions, and I certainly don't want to stay here in the jungle and eat raw rabbits and I certainly don't want to go back to the city and drink buttermilk. I don't want to chase my tail, but I don't want to play bridge either. I guess I don't belong in the hunter's world and I guess I don't belong in the lion's world. I guess I just don't belong anywhere," he said.

If you were Lafcadio, what would you do?

When one begins to examine a book critically to draw as much information and ideas out of it as possible, many different avenues open up. This is where the concept of webbing can be so helpful.